

From: Paul Baker
To: Downing, DeeAnn
Subject: Re: please prevent tar sands extraction in Utah

Sent
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MAY 11 2010

Div. of Oil, Gas & Mining

Ms. Downing--

I appreciate your comments about tar sands mining in Utah. There are major differences between the operations proposed in Utah and those in the Athabasca River area, most notably the scale. About 420 square kilometers (which equates to about 100,000 acres) have been disturbed in the Athabasca River Basin, where the PR Springs mine--at this point--would disturb about 213 acres. While this is still substantial, it is not nearly the same scale as the operations in Canada. In addition, the processing to be done at PR Springs uses relatively little water, so there are no tailings ponds.

I, too, enjoy hiking in southern Utah, but the PR Springs mine is immediately adjacent to an existing road with no hiking trails nearby. There is a lot of other development in the area from oil and gas wells. In my mind, the biggest impact will be on hunters, but once again, where this is right next to an existing road, I don't think there will be that much effect.

I don't believe the costs are long term. Considering the soils and precipitation available, the reclamation potential is very high. Although there will likely be unforeseen difficulties, the operator has put together a reclamation plan that should result in topography and vegetation that blends in nicely with the existing landscape.

The Utah Mined Land Reclamation Act recognizes the necessity of mining to the "economic and physical well-being" of the state and the nation, and unless an operator does not comply with the Act, mining is allowed. It is the responsibility of agencies like the Division of Oil, Gas and Mining to ensure it is done properly.

I hope this helps to allay some of your concerns, but please don't hesitate to contact me if you have further questions.

>>> DeeAnn Downing <redant@xmission.com> 4/6/2010 6:35 PM >>>

Dear Mr. Baker,

I am sure this must be a difficult position.

For me and my family, hiking--especially in Southern Utah has been one of our most enjoyed activities. Please preserve the environment in Utah.

Last October, I spoke with an Athabaskan elder who is suffering with her environment due to the degradation resulting from tar sands extraction. Please do not allow those same scars on our lands.

Tar sands are a short term solution to our energy needs with long term costs.

Thank you and all my best in your decision,
 Dee Downing

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What is to give light must endure burning.
- Victor Frankl